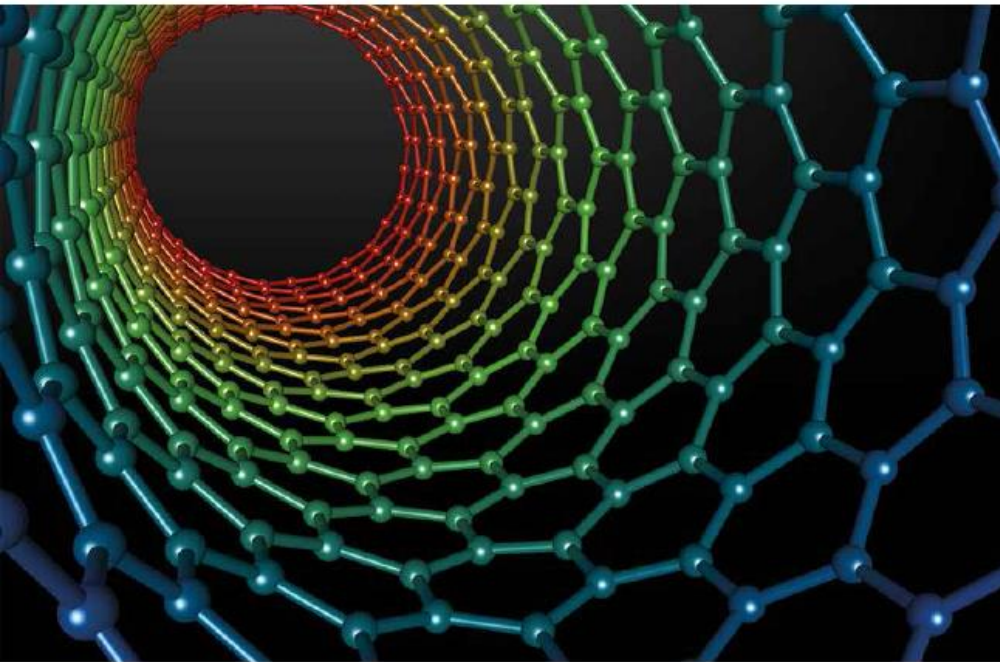


**WHO GUIDELINES  
ON PROTECTING WORKERS  
FROM POTENTIAL RISKS  
OF MANUFACTURED NANOMATERIALS**



Dr Evelyn Kortum, WHO Geneva

**Unit:** Interventions for Healthy Environments

**Department:** Public Health, Environment and Social Determinants of Health

**Cluster:** Environment, Climate and other Social Determinants of Health

# Focus of WHO work

- *“ The objective of the World Health Organization shall be the attainment by all people of the highest possible level of health”*
- WHO is the supreme international health agency within the UN family – health actions legitimized by its Constitution
- WHO’s mandate covers all aspects of public health including occupational health
- Occupational Health has been on the WHO agenda since its inception - various resolutions of the World Health Assembly

# What does WHO do in practice in the field of occupational health?

- Support Member States in implementing appropriate actions to protect and promote workers' health (normative work)
- Provide policy guidance
  - Recommend actions and interventions based on sound scientific evidence
  - Provide evidence-based guidelines to policy-makers in countries with a focus on LMIs

# Resolution WHA 60.26 "Workers' Health Global Plan of Action

Objective 2: to protect and promote health at the workplace

**11. The assessment and management of health risks at the workplace should be improved by:** defining essential interventions for prevention and control of mechanical, physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial risks in the working environment. Such measures include also integrated management of chemicals at the workplace, elimination of second-hand tobacco smoke from all indoor workplaces, improved occupational safety, and health impact assessment of **new technologies**, work processes and products at the design stage.

# A WHO guideline.....

- assists providers and recipients of health care and other stakeholders to make informed decisions
- contains recommendations about health interventions (clinical, public health or policy)
- WHO adopted GRADE approach (*Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluations*) – transparency of process and evidence used

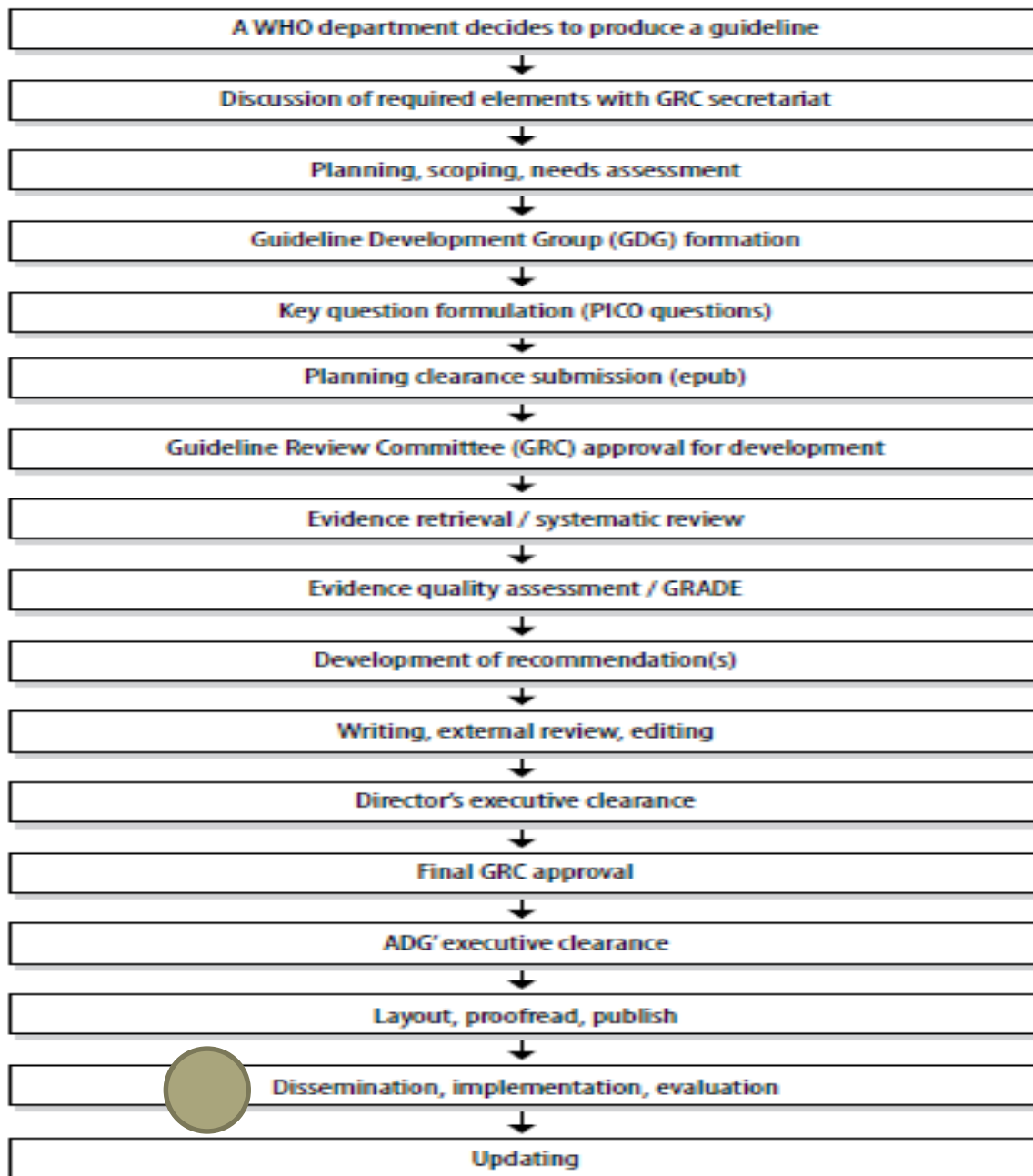
## A recommendation

- Implies a choice between different interventions that have an impact on health and that have implications for the use of resources.

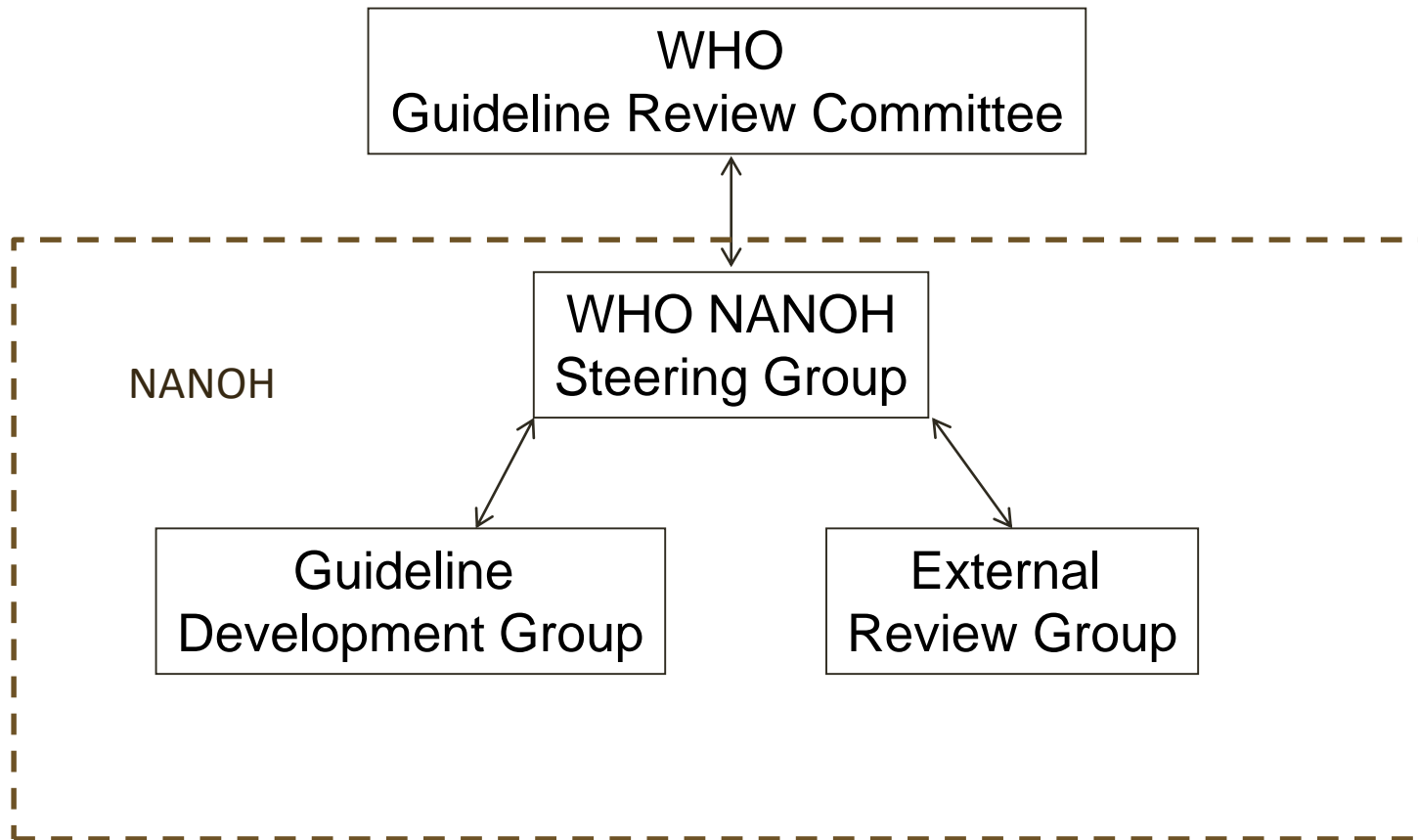
## What is the gap to other Guidance/Guidelines?

- Production processes often simple and unprotected in low- and medium-income countries (focus)
- Sufficient information available to provide **interim recommendations** and guidance about approaches to nanomaterial handling in the workplace (applying the **precautionary principle**).
- ❑ **Target group:** 1<sup>st</sup> phase: policy-makers in low and medium income countries; potential 2<sup>nd</sup> phase: implementation guide for employers and workers
- ❑ First WHO Global Guideline for Occupational Health

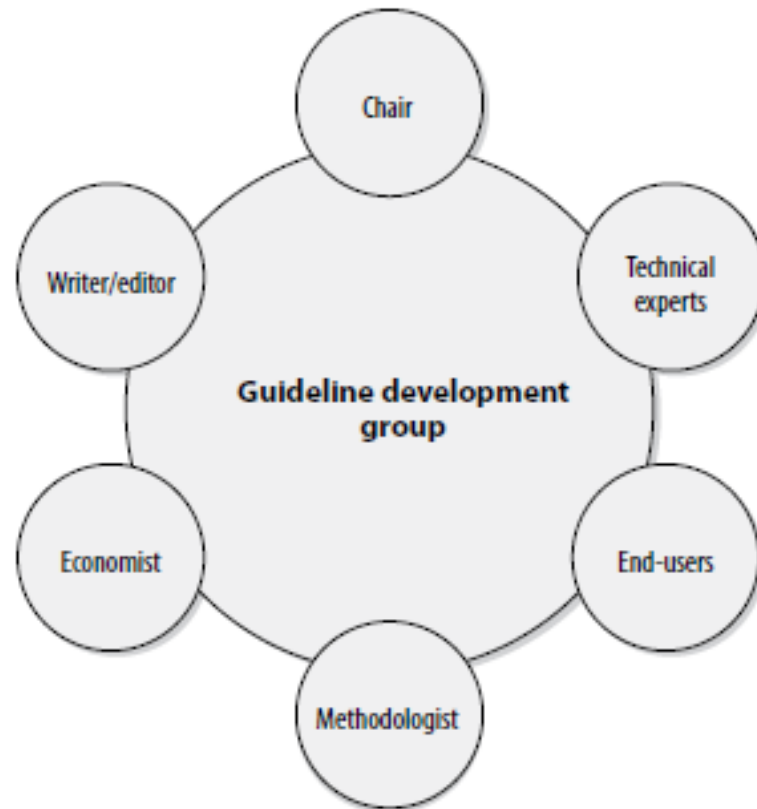
Figure 1.1 Overview of guidelines development process



# WHO NANO H Structure







# Contributors

- Pro-bono reviews by current and previous WHO Collaborating Centres for Occupational Health and other collaborators:
- *HSE, UK- STAMI, Norway - IOM, UK, University of Montréal, Canada for IRSST – INAIL, Italy, NIOSH, USA, NIOH, South Africa, FIOH, Finland - FUNDACENTRO, Brazil - UOEH, Japan - IFA, Germany - Hoseo University, KOSHA, South Korea – Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Iran – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa – National Institute of Public Health, Czech Republic – UOEH, Japan – BAuA, Germany – ETUC, Belgium – International Union (UAW), USA – University of Amsterdam, NL – Fundação, Brazil, China Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, China – American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), USA – Institut de Recherche Robert-Sauvé en Santé et en Sécurité de Travail, Canada – ANSES, France*